WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Production of sugar

*344. SHRIMATI JAMANA DEVI BARUPAL:

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether sugar season showed an excess of sugar production in 2002-03 (October—September);

(b) if so, what was the total sugar production in 2002-03;

(c) whether in the sugar season of 2003-04, the assessment up-till nine months show that the 200 lakh tonnes mark has been crossed;

(d) if so, whether the excess production of sugar would create a problem in the country;

(e) whether Government are considering to export more and more sugar during this year;

(f) if so, the efforts being made; and

(g) whether more export orders have been obtained?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) to (g) Sugar production during the current 2002- 2003 (October—September) sugar season is estimated at about 200 lakh tonnes, as against 185.25 lakh tonnes during the 2001-2002 sugar season. As on 7th July, 2003, the total production during the 2002-2003 season was 198'.65 lakh tonnes (provisional). The sugar season 2003-2004 (October—September) has yet to commence.

2. Sugar is exported under Open General Licence (OGL) and private parties/sugar mills export the same as per commercial judgement. The measures taken to promote the exports of sugar include:

(i) Quantitative restriction on export of sugar has been removed.

(ii) Sugar meant for exports is exempted from the levy obligation.

(iii) The quantity of sugar released for export is treated as advance freesale release to be adjusted in the freesale stocks of the sugar factories after a period of 18 months.

(iv) Duty Entitlement Pass Book (DEPB) at the rate of 4% of the FOB value of export of sugar has been allowed.

(v) The Sugar Development Fund Act, 1982 has been amended in order, *inter alia,* to utilize the Sugar Development Fund for defraying expenditure on internal transport charges and neutralization of ocean freight disadvantage to the sugar factories on export shipments of sugar.

3. During the financial year 2002-2003, the exports of sugar have amounted to approximately 14.70 lakh tonnes.

Unspent money with missions

*345. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Comptroller and Auditor General of India in its latest report on India's diplomatic missions abroad has criticised the practice of missions keeping unspent money for long with them;

(b) the number of missions which have been found doing so; and

(c) what steps have been taken by Government to ensure that this practice is discontinued?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (c) The Comptroller and Auditor General of India in its latest report has commented upon retention of funds by various missions in excess of the prescribed requirement of six weeks.

There are 27 missions, which figure in the report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year ending 31.3.2002.

The Ministry has been issuing instructions to Indian missions/posts abroad reiterating the need to manage their cash requirements in such a way that at no time their cash balance exceeds six weeks' requirements. Heads of missions/posts have been clearly instructed to streamline the internal financial control and meticulously plan their monthly requirements in order to avoid holding of funds in excess of the prescribed requirements. Instructions have been reiterated *vide* Circular Letter No. Q/FE/755/1/2002 dated 2.6.2003